


Mourning Gloria

Susan Wittig Albert

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Another herbal treat from national bestselling author Susan Wittig Albert.

While Pecan Springs, Texas bustles back to life in the warmth of spring, one woman's life is tragically brought to an end. Herbalist (and former lawyer) China Bayles happens upon a burning house trailer and hears a woman screaming for help. The evidence leaves no doubt that it's arson homicide.

Jessica Nelson, an intern-reporter at the local paper, is assigned to cover the story. But she's gotten herself too deeply involved. When Jessica disappears, China is determined to find her, before she becomes headlines herself.

Mourning Gloria Details

Date : Published April 5th 2011 by Berkley Hardcover

ISBN : 9780425239131

Author : Susan Wittig Albert

Format : Hardcover 301 pages

Genre : Mystery, Cozy Mystery, Fiction

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From Reader Review Mourning Gloria for online ebook

Pamela McLaren says

Another investing slice of small town life with a twist from Susan Witting Albert. China Bayles, former lawyer not owner of Thyme and Seasons, is busy with Saturday farmers markets, the store, its tea shop and the addition of her niece, Caitlin. Her husband is off working as a private investigator and everything seems normal until one evening, China comes across a burning trailer. She hears someone cry for help but is unable to get into the trailer before it blows up. And suddenly, because this is China Bayles, she's getting involved in a murder. An this time, there is an eager young journalist who may become the next victim.

Melodie says

I grade on a 1-10 basis and this one was a solid 9. Love this series and this one was not a disappointment! China is such a great character. She's strong and I love how she's feeling her way along, figuring out how to be a mom to Caitlin. Great book.....great series!

Karen says

I really enjoyed this book!! This was the first I had read by this author and you can bet I will be reading a lot more of her books..I enjoy the small town atmosphere that is surrounded by mystery and suspense..Would highly recommend this book!!

Deb Atwood says

I almost gave up on this book--several times. The first third was not only slow but also cutesy and saccharine and repetitive. The author was establishing a friendly, down-home Texas community along the way dissecting everybody's background, relationships, loves and hates, but a savvy reader will understand these connections in a tenth of the time. This was my first read of this series; I can't imagine how bored readers would be who were already familiar with this town and these characters.

That being said, about halfway in, the novel picks up in pace and interest, and I was happy to finish. There's a lot of talk about plants and gardening, so Mourning Gloria will appeal to readers interested in botany.

Chris Blackton says

Apparently I am in the minority for liking this book. It followed the same path as previous books by this author so I am not sure why other people didn't like it. I enjoy reading about different herbs and in this case they were hallucinogenic herbs which I found doubly interesting. I didn't guess who the killer was until I was told and that was mainly because the character wasn't even mentioned until the book was nearly done. I look

forward to the next in the series!

Karen says

I really like the China Bayles series. This one did not disappoint!

Ann Boytim says

Another adventure for China Bayles who in addition to owning a Tea Shop and a Herb shop writes for the town paper and has a stall in the weekly market. China lives with her husband a P.I. and his son and their new family member Caitie along with dog and cat.

China is driving home and sees a burning house trailer and stops to see if she is able to help but cannot get near the trailer except to see a woman cry "help me" It's too late for this person and she is burned beyond recognition. China is hot on the trail and gets to doing some investigating.

Susan says

Sigh, another series I'm tired of. Not that the China Bayles books have ever been favorites of mine, but I think even fans would say that the plot is lackadaisical and the writing is slack in this one. China is driving home one night and sees a trailer fire on the side of the road. But there's a woman trapped in the fire, and China can't get her out. Later she learns that it's a case of arson murder. Meanwhile, the local newspaper's summer intern Jessica gets the story, and because of elements in her own history becomes determined to find the killer. Then Jessica disappears, and China frantically hunts for the young woman. Oh, and China's adopted daughter gets a cat.

Fredell Boston says

This is the nineteenth edition of the China Bayles Mystery series. I am just trying to catch up with the books that I haven't read in this wonderful group of books.

While Pecan Springs, Texas bustles back to life in the warmth of spring, one woman's life is tragically brought to an end. Herbalist (and former lawyer)China Bayles happens upon a burning house trailer and hears a woman (Gloria) screaming for help. She tries to enter the burning trailer, but is injured herself. As a result she becomes involved in solving this arson homicide.

And then, Jessica Nelson, an intern-reporter at the local paper, is assigned to cover the story. But she's gotten herself too deeply involved. When Jessica disappears, China is determined to find her, before she becomes headlines herself.

Ms. Albert had the reader considering several suspects, and ended up becoming very engrossing I read it every chance I got. As usual, the presence of information, details and herbal remedies aided in the enjoyment of this installment of the series.

Joan Colby says

. I have been reading this series from its onset and I love it. One feels at home with the crew: China, a former lawyer who owns an herbal shop in the small Texas hill country town (fictional) of Pecan Springs, her friend the daffy Ruby, her husband, a former cop named Mac and his son Brian as well as her adopted daughter Caitie and all the rest. Each book is named for some type of herb or plant and Wittig Albert confers a lot of interesting flora information throughout as well as recipes. The back stories are interesting, but don't overwhelm the mystery aspect which is always well-done. The characters are more developed than in the usual cozy—in fact, China would hardly fit that appellation, being rather hard-headed and sensible. Mourning Gloria, which focuses on the drug trade, and includes the Morning Glory species as producing a compound similar to LSD, is also named for the murder victim, a young woman called Gloria. Wittig Albert, a former college professor and university president, lives in the hill country with her husband, the writer Bill Albert who co-authors a Victorian mystery series with her.

Nana Drew says

Someone said it was a boring book of China finding a trailer on fire, dead body and looking for a reporter missing in action. Nothing to really enjoy. Very curious statement. The entire book was China chasing leads. It WAS about China investigating. I liked it!

Michelle says

(3.5 stars) This is the 19th book in the series. China spots a trailer on fire, and hears screaming inside. Unfortunately, she is too late to help the victim. When a young journalism student interning for the local paper is assigned to the story, she has a personal connection due to losing her own family in a fire. Jessica is determined to find out what happened and finds herself in deep trouble. She reaches out to China, but then disappears. China does everything she can to help find out what happened, aiding as much as she can in the investigation. She finds herself digging into a situation involving possible smuggling and hallucinogenic drugs. Outside of the investigation, the sheriff and the chief of police are finally going to tie the knot, but it will involve one of them leaving the police force.

Meredith VanOordt says

Good series! Real people!

Linda L says

Aside from the gruesome murder, this book just kind of drifted along. Occasionally, there was a scene or story which did not fit (baby Grace being one), but we have to follow Jessica on her investigations, then follow China on the same ones -- too much. I think I've read other China Bayles books -- or at least one -- but did not enjoy this one very much. It went from students smoking pot to Mexican drug cartels, from herbs

to someone writing a book to who-knows-what. Perhaps by number 19, Susan was grasping at straws. And I think I have yet another one checked out. Hope it's better than this one -- which wasn't awful, but just OK.

Donna Davis says

We aren't mourning anything or anyone, really. We're talking about plants. Once in awhile we refer to the mystery of how and why the woman who was screaming in the trailer while it burned to the ground with her inside it was killed, but the murder is peripheral. The subject should scream with urgency, but it gets lost among the minutiae.

I have never abandoned a book from this series before. I was just about out of light reading (both mentally and physically; I prefer a fictional pocket paperback for bedtime), and I found this for a buck at a local charity shop. Now I know why someone gave it away.

The characterizations are descriptive enough, and I have read enough of the series, that I should have bonded with them by now, but they feel contrived and a little bit wooden. The one that has been best developed, in my own thinking, is the character of Sheila "Tough Cookie" Dawes. Ruby has always felt a little cartoonish to me, and though China voices how she feels about this, that, the other, I never feel it along with her. The writer's voice is either a chilly one, or else she's phoning it in.

I have a general rule of thumb when it comes to crime thrillers and mysteries, even cozy mysteries: if the book has recipes in it, it isn't a focused plot line. Don't buy books that have recipes unless you're buying a cookbook. It was good advice, and I should have listened to my inner voice here.

I found a second book by this writer at the same charity store, and it is from a second series that I've never read. I will try it; you never know. After all, I already gave them a buck for it; what more have I got to lose? But China Bayles and I are breaking up. It's so over.
